

**QUESTIONS FOR THE APPOINTEE TO THE WESTERN MICHIGAN  
UNIVERSITY BOARD OF CONTROL**

1. What goals would you like to accomplish during your time on the board?
2. Over the last 15 or 20 years it seems that all state universities have been expanding programs to try to offer everything to everyone. Do you think this is a good idea?
3. Please describe the conditions that would have to exist before you would vote to increase tuition?
4. Governor Granholm recently proposed giving additional funds from the federal economic stimulus package to universities and community colleges that hold the line on tuition. Do you support this proposal?
5. If Western Michigan University is facing a budget deficit, what areas would you look to first to make cuts? Please list several areas where the University has already made cuts or become more efficient.
6. Capital outlay projects for universities require a 25% match before getting funds from the state for building projects. In these tough economic times, do you think a university should be spending money on building projects rather than using that money to hold down tuition rates?
7. What type of outcomes should the university measure to determine if it is being successful?
8. What is your position on the importance of state universities as authorizers of charter public schools?
9. In which areas of technological research does your university specialize? How effective is your school at commercializing this research to help grow the state's economy?
10. Do you think that K-12 institutions are doing a good job of preparing students for college? Why?

Mary Asmanga-Knapp

**Questions**  
**Western Michigan University**  
**Board of Control**

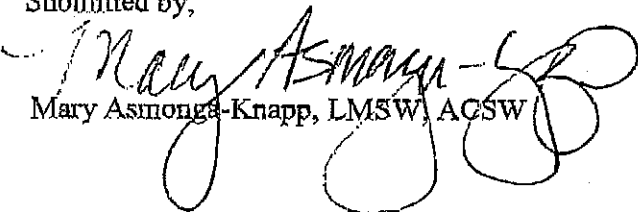
1. My goal is to do my best as a trustee for Western Michigan University. I hope to stand with Western as it weathers the storms of the current economic climate, while holding the line on excellence as it provides opportunity for career path change to the non traditional student who may have spent many years in occupations that no longer exist, their children, and others seeking higher education. As a non traditional student seeking a new career path, Western Michigan University opened its' doors to me welcoming me into the Graduate School of Social Work where I earned my MSW. I want to make sure that Western Michigan University continues to welcome those like myself who have experienced the shifting workforce as well as our children through an open door which is framed by WMU's exceptional history of commitment to students who desire higher education. Recent alterations in our economic and social structures have made significant changes necessary. We must strive to retain the good, while meeting demands of the moment as we prepare for the demands of the future.
2. I believe that Western Michigan University must offer competitive programming which attracts students to remain a viable institution. WMU offers 230 programs in higher education. These curricula manifest a high degree of prudence in program development and retention. Common sense dictates a "hold the line" position, while we assess future needs and possible change which must reflect the needs of the incoming student.
3. Any change in financial areas, including tuition increase, must satisfy two areas of concern. Do we need it and can we afford it? Tuition increase is a serious decision that should be avoided if possible.
4. I support Governor Granholm's decision.
5. Answering hypothetical questions, without substantial empirical data is difficult. I do know many cost cutting measures have recently been employed at WMU. Those areas are the coalition purchasing of gas and electricity, PPO insurance across the board, and substantial sacrifices in health care and financial compensation made by employees.
6. I believe that a University's Leadership Team should make decisions which "do no harm" and as such, work toward the benefit of the institution. Decisions should be made in light of what is best, need based, and affordable. In the case of

Sangren Hall at Western, the building is technologically deficient, energy inefficient, and needs basic updating. It is a heavily used classroom building. If Sangren's deficiencies are not addressed, what then? It may result in a more costly solution. By the same token, frivolously using much needed dollars for new buildings and expansion when not necessary is irresponsible. Especially when those dollars may be used to hold down tuition.

7. The answer is a practical one. How are our underclassmen retention rates? What are graduation rates? What is the level of student satisfaction? What do job placement rates tell us? What is the amount of student debt? These simple queries tell us a great deal about the success of our institutions. We must measure success by students who have met the goal of graduation requirements and received degrees. Western Michigan University has presented 13,000 (13,247) bachelor's degrees, nearly 4,000 (3,929) master's degrees and 274 doctoral degrees in the past three years. 80% of WMU graduates call Michigan home or wish to remain here as productive contributors of society. This is not only a boon to a sustainable Michigan economy; these very students wish to invest their lives in the Great State of Michigan.
8. I believe that the CISD and local school districts should maintain this authority under the purview of the State of Michigan.
9. Western Michigan University is known for translational or applied research in multiple areas. The Geosciences include water safety, petroleum and natural gas deposit identification. Alternative energy; biofuels from algae and trap grease, green manufacturing, and carbon sequestration. Within health care and life sciences; pharmaceutical development, gene expression, and medical team safety to prevent medical accidents. The college of Health and Human Services is ranked among the top ten schools in allied health receiving the highest funding for the National Institutes of Health for research that improves the health and welfare of Michigan residents. WMU's incubator initiative was created upon the foundation of research done at the university. These "start up" entrepreneurial ventures born at WMU will enhance growth in hi-tech Michigan employment. Since 2005, the University has grown the Intellectual Property Management and Commercialization. Although early in the commercialization process these prospects lend toward the hopeful end of job creation and new technologies in Michigan. The Biosciences and Research Commercialization Center (BRCC) which has been funded by the State of Michigan only enhances Michigan's economic development.

10. Some are and some are not. I believe that we are in transition in K-12 institutions. Schools are being asked to do more with less, classrooms are packed and oftentimes understaffed. Schools in areas where the median family income fares better than those who do not appear to me more successful. This can be ascertained from reviewing drop out rates across Michigan in multiple counties. Our question should be how do we improve education across the board? Perhaps Johnny has a promising career as a welder and not a brain surgeon. Perhaps Suzie is an attorney and Jane is a steel erector. Are we providing a strong foundation of basics as well as alternatives that match the demand of the job market? Life skills are sorely lacking in homes and perhaps we must revisit Home Economics and christen it with a name like "Life Skills at Home and at Work". With technology ever expanding, perhaps we must revisit Industrial Arts to include areas of pertinent technological trends. That being said, we must embrace and prepare pathways for teachers, lawyers, doctors, social workers, nano technologists as well as welders, service industry personnel, and many areas that our service economy will require. How are we doing? We can always do better!

Submitted by,

  
Mary Asmonga-Knapp, LMSW, ACSW